

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Costume is a vital form of communication in society for future success and meeting challenges in life. Costume is an important factor of human civilization. Even in Vedic times Satpatha Brahmins expressed the view that all the civilized persons should wear some clothing. Dress of Indian men and women has been a product of the soil, eminently suited to the climate. The dress appears to have received thoughtful scientific and aesthetic consideration. There were social rules governing the manner of putting on of clothes, especially on the part of women (24).

According to Goodman (36) clothing serves as a most eloquent exposition of a person. It is an art and expression of personality requiring study and research as much as any other factor associated with the life of the family requires for success. In any culture clothes and physical adornments are socially and psychologically important. It gives the person confidence for success because the good impression formed on others gives him social acceptance.

Dar (27) stated that clothes are an important medium between the person and the external world and is the most effective means of communication. We see one another through

the covering of clothes.

The origin of clothing is obscure. No one knows when man adopted clothing and gave up his nakedness. It does show a relationship with evolution of mankind as viewed by Anthropologists, Geologists and Archeologists. The evidence for the origin of clothing in relation to the evolution of man are limited as both are perishable and do not survive in archeological deposits.

Nothing on the surface of this earth remain for ever the same. Everything undergoes in time the most gradual changes which take place at varying degrees of rapidity, depending on its own nature and circumstances. These changing environmental conditions bring about a change in the requirements, customs and manner of living.

It is believed that clothing originated with an impulse to decorate the body. Hawks (40) has stated that unconscious feeling must have germinated in the mind of pre-historic man the love for personal finery. The natural man decorated him with feathers, bones or anything of striking colours or forms.

Painting, cutting, tattoing and scarification must have been the form of decoration which was the first step towards the modern dress. An ambition to be distinguished from the fellow being must have stimulated the desire for dress (29).

Ratzel stated that male jealousy instituted clothing for married women. First clothes were worn not by man who dashed through the forests, but the married women. The primary function for her dress was to make her unattractive for others and to conceal her body from the eyes of the other men (13).

In the Aurignacian period i.e. from the last iceage the evidence of clothing is still stronger. By this time, the pre-historic man became more aware of his action and of his separation from nature. This immediately led to tool making, then technical and scientific advances. The first eyed bone needle and skin piercing tool indicates the use of skin for garment and makes one believe that Aurignacian garments were tailored (40).

Throughout the general fluctuations of civilization, the development of costume never ceased to depend on one predominant factor, the human wearer. At various stages of his development, man was obliged to make successive modifications to his clothing in order to adapt it to the progress that had taken place around him (15).

Dar has commented that the evolution of Indian costume has been a processes of expansion and survival. It grew by the occasional addition of new elements simultaneously with a tenacious persistence of the old. The forms were altered with changing spirit of the time (27).

Clothing display a symbol of status, occupation, sex and religion. There are similarities and dissimilarities in clothing, hair style and ornaments among men and women in different parts of India. "Dress used during ceremonial rites contributes towards the creation of mood in accordance with the sentiments attached to the particular ceremony."

Costumes are also an expression of social beliefs. A particular style in the costume or use of a particular fibre in some communities is believed to protect the wearer from evil eyes.

India derives its running continuity of cultural identity and strength from common history and tradition built through the ages. Despite the proliferation of customs and beliefs, the trinity of customs and beliefs, the multiplicity of races and tribes all Indian are one in cultural heritage but differ in their environment, customs, costumes and traditions (77).

The great variety in Indian costume is like the numerous languages giving the impression of not only one but many countries. These costumes are the result of the geographical and other contemporary conditions which are also the outcome of social and economical condition, religious and political roles, expectations, acceptances.

India is known for the diversity of her people, their culture, race, religion and caste system. Through centuries race, religion, caste and region of the people have been judged by their wear. A particular way of draping certain garments

Usage of certain dress and fabric, colour and jewellery determine a person's **identity**. One finds all modes of dress from the holy sadhu clothed only in ashes and ~~boin~~ cloth to the highly westernized suit. The sari that is so common is draped in many fascinating ways. The Dhoti of men is worn differently, with the front pleats dangling down, or taken between the legs and tucked in at the back or the back is divided and tucked on two sides. Pyjama also range from the voluminous salwar, the straight simple Pyjama to the tight chooridars. Yet the information regarding these distinctions has not been compiled for reference or study of historic costume.

Ornaments were worn not only for adornment but also for their intrinsic value and for certain religious and superstitious reasons almost necessary in all classes rich and poor. Marriage was the great occasion to display these ornaments for beauty and adornment, and to show the social status of the family. Stones which form part of the design of gold or silver jewellery are attributed qualities of good and evil by the astrological theories. These stones are not only worn for their beauty but also to save the wearer from the evil influence and to evoke good ones.

The investigator while studying the history of ~~costumes~~ has noticed several changes taking place in costumes.

The styles of earlier dresses in relation to the enormous material used, the way they were draped and constructed always interested the investigator to study them and know the details. Investigator also thought that documentation on costume and the accessories would help to many others with this common interest. Therefore, the investigator decided to conceptualize the details of each garment, fabric and colour used for wearing apparel, jewellery and footwear in the North-Western India.